

OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT: WINTER FACT SHEET NO. 1
Columbia River Joint State Hearing
December 18, 2012

Fisheries under consideration:	Bonneville Pool Recreational Sturgeon
--------------------------------	---------------------------------------

- Under permanent rule, Zone 6 (Bonneville Dam upstream to McNary Dam) recreational white sturgeon fisheries open for retention effective January 1. The fisheries typically remain open until the annual harvest guideline for each pool is met.
- In 2012, the fishery in The Dalles Pool closed to retention on November 4 and the fishery in John Day Pool closed to retention on May 21.
- Based on public input, the Bonneville Pool fishery has been structured differently the past two years to allow for winter and summer retention seasons.
- In 2012, the fishery in Bonneville Pool was open to retention from January 1 through February 18 and on June 15-16 and June 22-23.
- The white sturgeon population in Bonneville Pool was assessed during the summer of 2012. Results of this assessment will be reviewed by the Sturgeon Management Task Force (SMTF) on January 22, 2013.
- The SMTF will discuss and develop management recommendations for 2013 Zone 6 white sturgeon fisheries, including potential modifications to harvest guidelines based on updated population assessments.
- In the interim, the 2012 recreational fishery harvest guidelines remain in effect:

Interim 2013 Zone 6 Recreational Sturgeon Harvest Guidelines		
Bonneville Pool	The Dalles Pool	John Day Pool
2,000	300	500

- Recognizing the continued public support for a split season approach for the Bonneville Pool fishery, staff has modeled potential seasons which would allow for the harvest guideline to be shared fairly evenly between the winter and summer seasons, and at the same time provide meaningful opportunity during each season.
- Harvest the past two years in Bonneville Pool has averaged 30 fish a day during January (930 fish a month) and 22 fish a day during February. Similar catch rates in 2013 would produce a catch of about 1,000 fish by Sunday, February 3 and 1,150 fish through Sunday, February 10.

- Considering public support for a split season in Bonneville Pool, and harvest expectations based on similar season structures, staff is proposing the following winter season for Bonneville Pool:

<i>Staff Recommendation: 2013 Bonneville Pool Recreational White Sturgeon Fishery</i>	
Season:	Tuesday January 1 through Sunday February 10, 2013
Area:	Mainstem Columbia River from Bonneville Dam upstream to The Dalles Dam, including adjacent tributaries.
Allowable Catch:	White sturgeon between 38-inches and 54-inches fork length.
Expected Harvest	1,150 white sturgeon

- In order to achieve a split season, staff's intent is to manage the winter season for a harvest of approximately 1,150 fish or a February 10 end date, whichever comes first.
- Staff will monitor the fishery as it progresses and provide an updates as needed.
- Any changes to the current Bonneville Pool harvest guideline from the SMTF will be reflected in the summer season structure. Staff does not anticipate a reduction to the guideline.
- Staff anticipates re-opening the Bonneville Pool retention season during June 2013.
- Staff is not recommending any changes for fisheries in The Dalles Pool and John Day Pool.

Future Meetings

- Staff is not proposing any hearings at this time.

The Winter Compact Hearing is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. Wednesday January 30, 2013 at the Sheraton Portland Airport Hotel (8235 Northeast Airport Way Portland, Oregon). The purpose of this hearing is to review salmon and steelhead stock status and consider non-Indian commercial and recreational fishing seasons in the Columbia River and Select Areas, including:

- 2013 recreational spring salmon fisheries.
- 2013 recreational sturgeon fisheries downstream of Bonneville Dam.
- 2013 Select Area winter-summer commercial fisheries.
- 2013 Non-Indian commercial winter/spring commercial salmon fishing plan.